

THE OROKAIVA PEOPLE

619 be understood, however, that the present is a very rough-and-ready statement of the case; for there is far more blending and complexity than appears in a bare list of nine tribes. A fuller treatment of the classification of tribes will be given in Chapter X; in the meantime the principal of them are:

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| 1. Binandele and Jeva Buje. | 6. Sangara. |
| 2. Tain-Daware. | 7. Dirou. |
| 3. Aiga. | 8. Wasida. |
| 4. Yega. | 9. Hunjara. |
| 5. Sauaha. | |

Their disposition may be seen on the map.

The native roughly classifies these tribes according to their environment. The River People are called *Umo-ke*, lit. 'water-language'; they comprise the Binandele of the Mambare and Gira rivers and the large branch of the same tribe called Jeva Buje, inhabiting the lower Kumusi. The coastal Tain-Daware and Yega are called *Eva-Embo*, 'Salt-water Men', and the inland tribes are collectively known as *Au-tembo*, 'Bushmen', or more often as *Perebo* (*Berepo*), a word which has the same general meaning, or more specifically stands for the 'little bush-pigs' that are captured wild in the forest. There are naturally some environmental differences between these large groups, but it appears that such differences are not essential. There seems to be no good ground other than group-conceit for the opinion of an Aiga that the Bush People were *momoseja*, attractive and 'pretty' (the same word would be applied to a brilliant croton leaf), while the River People were *kamoseja*, ugly and unattractive, with black skins like Kiwais, ringworm, and elephantiasis.

619 Apart from certain cultural differences which are probably the direct result of environment, as e.g. in methods of fishing and their appliances, there are others of greater significance which are probably due to some contact influence. The most important of these consists in the religious and social ceremonies involving the use of the bull-roarer and the sacred flute. These objects are known in the southern part of the Division, but their use is discontinued with some abruptness when we reach the Aiga, the Binan-

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slightly from that of Chinnery and Beaver,¹ but principally by a slight amplification. I have divided their Dobodura tribe into three, Sauaha, Sangara, and Dirou; and I have given the name Jeva-Buje to that branch of the Binandele inhabiting the lower Kumusi. By the addition of minor tribal names, such as are mentioned on p. 151, the matter would be complicated and not helped.

In one instance, that of Sauaha (and perhaps we might say in another, that of the Binandele and the Jeva-Buje), the tribal territory is not continuous, but in the others there is a fairly well-defined local spirit which belongs to a solid block of territory. This local spirit, which was in evidence among the clans (*vide* p. 107), is certainly of some moment. It is probably the principal motive behind the minor tribal groups and the temporary clan confederacies within the tribe. When, for instance, a number of clans band together to support one of their number in a semi-warlike dispute, it is, I have been told, because they are *pusu tabavo*, 'one ground', and, therefore, natural allies.

Although the boundaries on the map make it appear that the tribal territories are coterminous, there is commonly a no-man's-land of greater or less extent. This is particularly marked in the case of the Aiga, who (while in close touch with the Jeva-Buje) are separated from their other neighbours on north, east, and west by a good half-day's journey through virtually uninhabited country. In the more densely populated southern end of the division this territorial isolation is not so complete.

(2) Certain tribal peculiarities have been spoken of already in Chapter I. On the whole we may wonder at their absence rather than their presence. It is sometimes possible to distinguish men of different tribes merely by differences in their dress and ornaments. The Binandele commonly wear the bark-cloth perineal band with the end tied in a knot at the belt; the bush people in general have it suspended as an apron. The Aiga are said to be fond of the streamers of thin betel-palm spathe attached to the tags of their hair. The Tain-Daware and other coastal people especially affect

¹ *Annual Report*, 1914-15, p. 161.

197 and believe that each of the four words is applicable to the
619 same loose concept.

619 (4) The fourth of these features, which lend individuality
721 to the tribe, is the fact that it is constantly at enmity with
various of its neighbours, and that in the fighting which so
frequently ensues it is a unit and not divided against itself.
It is not to be imagined, of course, that the component clans
of any tribe remained at permanent peace with one another,
for that is hardly in Orokaiva nature. But inter-clan fights
were not characterized by the deliberate blood-thirstiness of
the tribal raid, and they resulted in comparatively few
casualties. Furthermore—what is an important distinction
[266]—there was never, except in the most abnormal instances,
any cannibalism within the tribe. The inter-clan fight is
619 called *embogi*, and the raid or tribal expedition *isoro*. Most
721 of the fighting described in the following chapter will be
192 of the latter kind, in which men of one tribe attack those of
another. Friends or allies are called *tobo* and enemies *ki-tobo*,
and although the friendship or affinity between certain
tribes allowed the use of the former word, it would be fair
to say that in most cases the tribes were mutually *ki-tobo*.

619 We are justified in adding a fifth essential in the delimita-
186 tion of the tribe, viz. the recognition of a common name.
I have already spoken (p. 2) of the difficulty of naming
ethnic units. In the largest groups, as we see them, there
is no recognition within the group itself of a common name;
but as we descend the scale we reach a point where such
a name comes into use, where the members of the group are
able to say 'We are so and so'. Among the Orokaiva we
reach this stage when we come to the tribes. They are in
fact the largest units which are able consistently to name
themselves. I would suggest therefore that the use of a
common name, implying as it does a recognition of unity,
is a very essential factor in the individuality of the tribe.

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One feature—almost amusing—in the attitude toward outsiders is a propensity for oburgation—though one does not imply that the Orokaiva swear more ardently than other natives. But the gravest and sternest of men may work himself into a hoarse frenzy, and caper and gesticulate in a perfect abandonment of abuse when he is addressing the enemy on the opposite bank of the river; and strange to say (and here we see a complete contrast with intra-group morality) it is the 'strong-man' who swears the loudest and huris defiance in the most boastful and abusive terms. The Aiga tribe are not ashamed but proud of their legendary reputation as 'strong-talkers' (p. 158). 183 689

Along with this hostility toward outsiders goes an intense pride in the group itself. This, in times of peace as well as war, finds expression in boasting and display. At the *esn*, which is a kind of mock warfare, the fierce harangues of the principals are composed of bragging and derision. They dwell continually on their prowess as fighters, on their mere strength of numbers, and on their material wealth. So much store is set upon the last-mentioned that it must be one of the highest satisfactions in the Orokaiva's life to set forth a great display of garden food and a number of fat pigs before the guests. Accordingly we must allow a place among the extra-group virtues to liberality, albeit by no means free from the taint of self-display. Moreover, one may always perceive a formal courtesy and an observance of all the somewhat noisy rites of hospitality when the guests arrive at a public function, although the several parties may be like tinder awaiting the spark. On the part of the guests themselves there is an almost impressive assumption of gravity while they file in amid the din of welcome, wearing expressions that may vary between complete indifference and a somewhat fierce sternness, but must never betray a glimmer of excitement, least of all a flattered smile. It is their way under the circumstances of evincing their corporate pride and dignity; so they maintain a reserve even in the face of hospitality, as if they almost grudging acknowledgement. But these milder virtues of extra-group morality are unsteady things. Let there be some cause 186 574

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574 of offence and they will vanish in a moment, giving place to open hostility and the conduct which that condition demands.

181 Before leaving this subject of extra-group morality it is worth while quoting some opinions of those who in the early dangerous days had to face the Orokaiva as enemies. Sir Wm. MacGregor, after many and various meetings with hostile tribes from end to end of Papua, wrote (of the Mambare people): 'It is very clear that these natives are more warlike, pugnacious, and cunning than any we have had to deal with hitherto.'¹ W. E. Armit, the resident magistrate, who in the days of the gold-rush had as wide a fighting experience of them as any other, wrote (of the Papangi): 'They are certainly not destitute of courage, but, on the other hand, they are treacherous, truculent, aggressive, cruel, and cunning. . . . They fight treacherously and lie abominably'; and of the people about Wasida he records a very nasty first impression: 'The men have villainous faces, coupled to a peculiar cunning leer which imparts a diabolical look to their countenances.'² These natives of Wasida are later spoken of as the 'most rampant and obstinate of savages' who 'persistently attacked every Government party which went near them'.³ It is pleasing to add that under different circumstances, viz. those of service with the Armed Constabulary, the character of the Orokaiva appears more favourably. Speaking as Commandant, Capt. Barton said that the Mambare police were 'brave to a fault';⁴ later as Administrator he said, of the police recruited from the Northern and North-Eastern Divisions at large, that they have 'stronger characters than is the case in the majority of Papuans, and are also physically sturdy and alert';⁵ and H. J. Ryan, a true soldier himself, found that the Northern men in his detachment at Kikori performed their allotted tasks cheerfully and willingly, and when on patrol were most zealous to distinguish themselves, especially when facing hostile natives.⁶

¹ *Annual Report*, 1896-7, p. 28.

² *Ibid.*, 1904-5, p. 14.

³ *Ibid.*, 1903-4, p. 13.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1899-1900, p. 98.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1900-1, p. 87.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 1912-13, p. 78.